

~~SECRET~~
INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Siam

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 7 Mar 1949

SUBJECT Soviet Attempts to Purchase Tin and Tungsten in Siam

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PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

1. Persons connected with the Soviet Legation in Siam are said to be arranging for purchases of tin concentrates, averaging approximately 70 percent tin. Several small Chinese firms have been approached to act as purchasing agents. The purchases are to be made in United States dollars.*
2. The same Chinese firms were also asked to purchase tungsten for the USSR, but Siamese production of tungsten is relatively small.
3. A number of (sic) Soviet technical men have reportedly visited the tin producing area of Phuket and have expressed an interest in the present output and productive capacity of that region.**

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* ~~SECRET~~ Comment. Such purchases, when transacted clandestinely, make it possible for the seller to retain all foreign exchange. In open sales, such as those to the United States, the seller must relinquish 50 percent of the foreign exchange to the Bank of Siam.

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** ~~SECRET~~ dated 1 September 1948, reported that the Soviets were offering up to 10,000 tons of paper or flour at a time in exchange for tin ore through the medium of Chinese contractors in south Siam. See also ~~SECRET~~ which reported the trip of A. A. Panteleimonov, Soviet Commercial Attache in Siam, to Phuket to investigate the possibility of Soviet tin purchases in south Siam. This trip was made in late October 1948.

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